



Senator Harris, Representative Ritter and distinguished members of the Committee on Public Health:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Paul Shipman. I am Senior Director of Communications and Government Relations for the Charter Oak Chapter of the American Red Cross, representing the American Red Cross Chapters of Connecticut in expressing our support for passage of S.B. 981, AAC THE AVAILABILITY OF AUTOMATIC EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS IN SCHOOLS

More than 250,000 Americans suffer from sudden cardiac arrest each year and less than 10 percent of them will survive.

Prompt administration of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) can help. But CPR cannot restart a heart by itself. In more than two-thirds of all cardiac arrests, an electric shock, known as defibrillation, is needed. Studies show that prompt CPR followed by early defibrillation can reduce death from sudden cardiac arrest. The links in the cardiac chain of survival include early activation of the emergency medical system (EMS); prompt CPR; early defibrillation; and advanced cardiac life support (post-incident care provided in a hospital setting). Weakness in any link lessens the chance of survival.

By enacting legislation to support the use of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and by increasing the number of individuals that are trained to respond, the survival rate can be increased significantly. Some studies indicate early CPR and defibrillation can double survival rates for sudden cardiac arrest that occurs outside hospital settings.

Schools have large concentrations of students and employees during operational hours and are the sites of athletic and other community activities during normal operational hours and outside those hours. Enacting this legislation will make schools in the State of Connecticut safer places to learn, work and play.

Thank you again for the opportunity to express our support of this important bill.

Sincerely,

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